

Message Text

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SUBJECT: FAREWELL CALL ON GDR DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER GRUNERT

1. DURING A 50-MINUTE FAREWELL CALL SEPTEMBER 22 ON GDR DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER GRUNERT, WHO HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR US/GDR RELATIONS, WE DISCUSSED THE CONSULAR CONVENTION HUMANITARIAN CASES, AND SPOKE IN GENERAL TERMS ABOUT OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. GRUNERT ALSO TOOK THE OCCASION TO MENTION THE GDR INTENTION TO IMPLEMENT THEIR DIPLOMATIC RELATIIONS WITH CANADA. MR. SIEMENS OF THE AMERICAN DESK OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND DCM POLANSKY WERE PRESENT DURING THE TALK.

2. AFTER INITIAL PLEASANTRIES AND COURTESIES, I NOTED THERE WERE SEVERAL ISSUES I WISHED TO RAISE WITH HIM TO WHICH BOTH SIDES ATTACHED IMPORTANCE, ISSUES I HAD DISCUSSED WITH SECRETARY HONECKER. I FIRST TOOK UP THE CONSULAR CONVENTION, OBSERVING THAT WE HAD REACHED A TENTATIVE AGREEMENT ON VIRTUALLY ALL ISSUES, EXCEPT FOR THE NATIONALITY PROBLEM. I KNEW THE GDR HAD DIFFICULTIES WITH THE ABSENCE OF A DEFINITION OF NATIONALITY BECAUSE OF THEIR CONCERN ABOUT THE FRG. THE TRUTH IS THAT THE US HAS A NUMBER OF CONSULAR CONVENTIONS, NONE OF WHICH INCLUDES A DEFINITION OF NATIONALITY. THUS WE HAD NO PRECEDENT ON THIS SUBJECT AND DID NOT WISH TO ESTABLISH ONE. WHILE THE FRG AND GDR MAY ATTACH IMPORTANCE TO SUCH A DEFINITION THE US DOES NOT. I DIRECTED CONFIDENTIAL

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HIS ATTENTION TO MY EARLIER DISCUSSION WITH DR. GEYER

(BERLIN 6726), ADDING IT WAS MY VIEW THAT IF BOTH SIDES REALIZE WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT IS NOT THE POLITICAL ISSUE BUT THE PRACTICAL MEANING OF A CONVENTION, THEN IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO FIND AN APPRROPRIATE SOLUTION.

3. GRUNET BROKE IN, SAYING THAT UNFORTUNATELY THE FACT WAS THAT, DESPITE OUR JOINT EFFORTS, PROGRESS IN US/GDR RELATIONS WAS " SMALL". THE GDR IS VRY INTERESTED IN BETTER RELATIONS AND IN SOLVING PROBLEMS IN A CONSTRUCTIVE SPIRIT. HE REFERRED TO SINDERMANN'S COMMENT TO ME THAT THE GDR CANNOT IGNORE THE US(BERLIN 6731). BUT SINCE US AND GDR INTERESTS ARE NOT ALWAYS THE SAME, THE GDR WAS NOTALWAYS CONVINCED WE WANTED TO IMPOROVE RELATIONS WITH THE GDR. IN DISCUSSING BILATERLA RELATIONS, THE QUESTION OF LINKAGE BETWEEN VARIOUS ISSUES HAD BEEN RAISED. WHEREAS, ACCORDING TO GRUNERT, I HADMADE CLEAR THERE WAS NO LINKAGE BETWEEN PROBLEMS, OTHER OFFICIAL AMERICANS HAD NOT BEEN SO CLEAR. IN GRUNERT'S VIEW, THEY WERE SHORTLY GOING TO HAVE A " DECISIVE OPPORTUNITY" TO TEST OUR POSITION, IN CONNECTION WITH THE FORTHCOMING FISHERIES AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS. (NOTE: THE ONLY OCCASION IN WHICH GRUNERT HAD DISCUSSED LINKAGE WITH ME WAS AT OUR FIRST MEETING).

4. TURNING SPECIFICALLY TO THE CONSULAR CONVENTION, GRUNERT SAID HE WAS AWARE IT WAS EASIER TO USE ARGUEMENTS ABOUT HE NEED FOR A DEFINITION OF NATIONALITY WITH THOSE WESTERN EUROEPAN STATES THAT DO HAVE CONSULAR CONVENTIONS WITH THE FRG THAN IT IS WITH THE US. ON THE OTHER HAND, A DEFINTION IS HIGHLY IMPORTANTFOR THE GDR IN ITS EFFORT TO DO AWAY WITH TE REMANANTS OF THE HALLSTEIN DOCTIRINE, AND SPECIFICALLY ON THE THE NO-RECOGNITION OF GDR CITIZENSHIP. THAT, GRUNERT SAID, IS WHY THE MATTER IS IMPORTANT TO THE GDR.

5. HE ADDED THE GDR HAD NO DESIRE FOR STALEMENATE NEGOTIATIONS, AND THEY WERE SEARCHING FOR A COMPROMISE A NUMBER OF IDEAS, NOT YET " SUFFICIENTLY MATURE," ARE UNDER DISCUSSION AND WILL TAKE A " FEW MORE WEEKS," TO STAFF OUT. AT THAT POINT, GRUENER SAID, THE GDR WILL CONFIDENTIAL

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MAKE SUGGESTIONS AND PROPOSE DATES FOR TALKS. I EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR HIS EXPLANATION, AGREEING IT WAS USEFUL TO BRING NEW APPROACHES TO THESE TALKS.

6. I THEN RAISED THE QEUSTION OF HUMANITARIAN CASES, NOTNG THAT I HAD RAISED THE ISSUE ON MANY OCCASIONS. THE GDR MAY HAVE FELT WE WERE TRYING TO INTERFERE IN ITS DOMESTIC AFFAIRS IN RAISING THIS SUBJECT. THIS WAS

NOT SO. WE AHVE A LARGE NUMBER OF CITIZNES OF GERMAN DESCENT WHO ARE ANXIOUS TO SEE THEIR KIN AT TIMES OF TRAGEDY, OR ARE INTERESTED IN FAMILY REUNIFICATION, AND ALSO MARRIAGES. GIVEN THE SIZE OF THE GERMAN POPULATION N THE US, I WAS SURPRISED THERE WERE NOT MORE SUCH CASES. AS MORE CASES DEVELOP, US CITIZENS WOULD BE TALKING WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND CONGRESS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THEM SATISFACTORILY. I SAID THE SECRETARY GENERAL HAD SHOWN INTEREST IN THE ISSUE, AND I ADDED IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF MORE PROGRESS COULD BE MADE IN THIS AREA, WHICH I DID NOT THINK WOULD DISTRUB GDRINTERNAL AFFAIRS. I SUGGESTED IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF THE EMBASSY AND THE MFA COULD ESTABLISH PROCEDURES TO MEET AND DISCUSS CASES INAN EFFORT TO DETERMINE THE MERITS OF EACH ONE.

7. GRUNERT INDICATED HE HAD BEEN LOOKING RECENTLY INTO THE MATTER OF HUMANITARIAN CASES(PERHAPS AS A RESULT OF MY TALK WITH HONECKER) AND ASSERTED THE US HAD ACKNOWLEDGED THAT MUCH HAS HAPPENED(I DO NO KNOW THE US SOURCE, IF THERE IS ANY?) WHILE NOW AND THEN THERE MAY BE RED TAPE " ON BOTH SIDES," MATTERS HAVE MOVED FORWARD, ACCORDING TO GRUNERT. HE THEN SAID THE GDR GETS" NERVOUS" WHEN IT SENSES ATTEMPTS ARE BEING MADE TO KEEP CASES ALIVE, PRESUMABLY TO BURDEN RATHER THAN EASE RELATIONS. IN A DEFENSIVE NOTE, HE ASSERTD THAT UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW THESE CASES WERE ONES FOR THE GDR TO DECIDE AND THAT IT COULD NOT AGREE TO EFFORTS TO SET UP" INSTITUTIONS" TO INVESTIGATE AND DECIDE THEM. HE CONCLUDED THIS PART OF HIS PRESENTATION WITH A FLAT STATEMENT THAT THE US KNOW WHAT THE " ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES" AND AND SHOULD FOLLOW THEM.

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8. I RESPONDED THAT WE WERE IN NO WAY SUGGESTING ANY KIND OF SUPRANATIONAL ORGANIZATION, BUT MERELY TRYING TO DEVELOP BETTER PROCEDURES WHICH WOULD ENABLE US TO PRESENT THE FACTS AND FACILITATE SATISFACTOY RESOLUTION OF THE CASES. I ADDED, AS A SIGN OF OUR SERIOUSNESS, THAT WE HAD NOT PUBLICIZED THESE CASES, EVEN THOUGH WE ARE BEING PRESSURED BY THE FAMILIES INVOLVED AND CONGRESS FOR SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION.

9. GRUNERT THEN RAISED THE MATTER OF THE GDR'S INTENTION TO GIVE " SUBSTANCE" TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THEIR RELATIONS WITH CANADA, SAYING HE WAS PROVIDING ME WITH THIS INFORMATION ALTHOUGH A FORMAL APPROACH WOULD BE MADE INTHE NEAR FUTURE TO THE DEPARTMENT BY THE GDR EMBASSY. SINCE THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT INDICATED IT IS

NOT PREPARED TO OPEN AN EMBASSY IN BERLIN, THE GDR HAS
"ARRIVED AT A DECISION" TO SEEK APPROVAL OF THE US
GOVERNMENT TO ENABLE AMBASSADOR SIEBER TO REPRESENT GDR
INTERESTS IN CANADA. THE CANADIAN AMBASSADOR IN WARSAW
WOULD REPRESENT CANADIAN INTERESTS IN IN THE GDR.

10. AS PART OF THIS DEVELOPMENT," WHICH WILL PUT AN ADDITIONAL BURDEN ON AMBASSADOR SIEBER'S ALREADY HEAVY WORK LOAD," ACCORDING TO GRUNERT, THE GDR WOULD LIKE TO HAVE AN ADDITIONAL TWO OR THREE COLLEAGUES ASSIGNED TO THE GDR EMBASSY AT WASHINGTON TO FOLLOW EXCLUSIVELY CANADIAN AFFAIRS. GRUNERT SAID HE DID NOT EXPECT A DIRECT ANSWER FROM ME, BUT ADDED HE WOULD LIKE MY SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSAL FOR ADDING COLLEAGUES TO THE GDR EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON. HE ALLUDED TO POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES, REFERRING TO THE MINUTE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WHICH CONTAINED A REFERENCE TO A "CEILING" ON THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES. SINCE, I SAID, THE MATTER WOULD BE PRESENTED FORMALLY THROUGH THE GDR EMBASSY IN WASHINGTO, I NOTED MERELY THAT WE HAD THE HIGHEST RESPECT FOR CANADA AND THAT IT IS RESPECTED AROUND THE WORLD.

11. COMMENT: UNLIKE FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER(BERLIN (6749) GRUNERT'S COMMENTS SUGGEST THAT, FOLLOWING MY TALK WITH HONECKER, GDR AUTHORITIES MAY BE REVIEWING ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE US. GRUNERT'S REMARKS ABOUT NEW CONFIDENTIAL

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IDEAS CONCERNING THE CONSULAR CONVENTION ARE IN LINE WITH DR. GEYER'S (BERLIN 6726), BUT IT WOULD BE PREMATURE TO BE OPTIMISTIC TO ASSUME THEY HAVE GONE FAR ENOUGH TO MEET OUR POSITION. AT THE SAME TIME, GRUNERT'S STATEMENTS ON THE PROCESSING OF HUMANITARIAN CASES ARE NOT PARTICULARLY REASSURING. I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE IT IS IN OUR INTEREST, THEREFORE, PERIODICALLY TO RAISE THE MATTER AT HIGH LEVELS IN THE DEPARTMENT WITH AMBASSADOR SIEBER AS WELL AS HERE ON APPROPRIATE OCCASIONS.

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